DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 351 097 PS 020 610

AUTHOR	Zeh, Joyce D.; Baenen, Nancy R.
TITLE	Early Prevention of School Failure: Evaluation Report.
INSTITUTION	Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, N.C.
REPORT NO	E&R-R-91.06
PUB DATE	Aug 91
NOTE	58p.; For a related report, see ED 349 087.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrator Attitudes; *Early Intervention; Elementary School Students; Grade 1; *Inservice Teacher Education; Kindergarten; Participant Satisfaction; *Prevention; Primary Education; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; Screening Tests; *Staff Development; Surveys; *Teacher Attitudes; Validated Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Early Prevention of School Failure; Wake County Public School System NC

ABSTRACT

Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) is a nationally validated program designed to prevent school failure by identifying the developmental levels and learning styles of children 4 to 6 years of age, and providing materials and teaching strategies to address students' needs and develop their strengths. In 1986-87, EPSF was introduced to the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) in North Carolina, and in 1990-91 a program evaluation was conducted. The evaluation was based on structured interviews and surveys of staff, focusing on screening, kindergarten instruction, training, supplies, implementation at the first grade level, effectiveness, and the overall early childhood program in the WCPSS. In addition, the evaluation examined student screening results. It was found that 78% of the kindergarten teachers found the EPSF training to be effective, though comments from kindergarten and first grade teachers, and principals and assistant principals, indicated an interest in more ongoing training. A total of 92% of the teachers interviewed stated that they did not have adequate supplies to implement EPSF. The EPSF program was not implemented as fully in grade 1 as in kindergarten, and coordination between kindergarten and first grade teachers was limited. Among kindergarten teachers surveyed, 73% agreed that EPSF helped students overcome skill deficiencies, though most respondents felt that modality instruction, in conjunction with kindergarten curriculum and materials, was responsible for positive results. Detailed survey and interview results are attached. (AC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED351097

EVALUATION REPORT:

EARLY PREVENTION OF SCHOOL FAILURE

Department of Evaluation and Research
Wake County Public School System

August, 1991

E&R Report No. 91.06

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Nancy R. Baenen
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PS 020610

91.06

EVALUATION REPORT: EARLY PREVENTION OF SCHOOL FAILURE

REPORT SUMMARY

Authors: Joyce D. Zeh and Nancy R. Baenen

BACKGROUND

Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) is a nationally validated program that is designed to prevent school failure by addressing student needs early in their educational experience. EPSF provides early screening to identify students' developmental learning needs, as well as strategies to address these needs and build student strengths.

EPSF was introduced to the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) in 1986-87 as a pilot effort in several elementary schools. The program has been phased into all elementary schools since that time; all schools have had EPSF in both 1989-90 and 1990-91.

While EPSF has been validated in multiple locations around the country, this is the first evaluation of the program in the WCPSS. This first report focuses on EPSF 1990-91 implementation and staff attitudes; it is based on structured interviews and surveys of staff, plus of student screening results. A second report, scheduled for completion this December, will focus primarily on long-term evidence of EPSF effectiveness for WCPSS students.

MAJOR FINDINGS

SCREENING: Fall screening is the most valued part of EPSF, because it effectively identifies students' needs. Survey results indicate clearly mixed views on the timing of the screening, with 54% agreeing it should occur during the school year and 46% disagreeing or undecided. Most comments from the interviews and surveys favor earlier screening.

KINDERGARTEN INSTRUCTION: Three fourths of the kindergarten teachers surveyed indicate they incorporate modality instruction for their EPSF students daily. Teacher definitions of "incorporating modality instruction" appear to vary; interviews reveal great differences in the extent to which specific EPSF strategies and separate modality groups are utilized. Most teachers and administrators deem modality instruction strategies as valuable only when they are integrated into the general curriculum--centers, units, and content areas (one acceptable delivery method for EPSF). Many interviewees also conclude that unless the techniques, strategies, and methods are modified, the program is unmanageable and ineffective.

TRAINING: EPSF training is viewed as effective by most (78%) of the kindergarten teachers surveyed, with 69% seeing the training as sufficient for all components. Teachers and principals who were interviewed had mixed views on the quality of the training provided thus far. Comments from both sources indicate that kindergarten and first grade teachers, as well as principals and assistant principals, would like more ongoing training. Those with the most training feel most comfortable using EPSF. Some teachers (as well as principals) have missed training along the way. Monitoring EPSF has been delegated to assistant principals in some schools, and they were not involved in the formal training.

SUPPLIES: Nearly all teachers interviewed (92%) state that they have not had adequate supplies to implement EPSF appropriately, even when it is integrated into the kindergarten curriculum. They express great concern over the lack of consumable and manipulative materials for the entire early childhood program.

FIRST GRADE: Implementation of EPSF at the first grade level bears further investigation. The limited number of first grade teachers interviews this past spring (8), suggest that EPSF is not implemented as fully in grade 1 as in grade K, that coordination between kindergarten and first grade teachers is limited, and that training needs exist. First grade teachers do appear to use the kindergarten posttest information to group students and select instructional materials. Follow-up services to students with continuing needs appear less than ideal.

EFFECTIVENESS: Among kindergarten teachers surveyed, 73% agree that EPSF helps to overcome skill deficiencies. However, fewer teachers (53%) see EPSF as being as effective as in the past. Interviews indicate 59% of the 22 teachers and principals see the program as effective overall. Most interview respondents (82%) do not attribute student outcomes directly to EPSF. Rather, modality instruction, in conjunction with kindergarten curriculum and materials, are seen as responsible for positive results.

EARLY CHILDHOOD: Principals and teachers express some general concerns about the overall WCPSS program at the early grades. Those interviewed express dissatisfaction with the addition of new programs for kindergarten and first grade without the deletion of the programs started earlier. They also feel a lack of consistency in WCPSS in terms of the definition of "early childhood" and continuity in approaches across the grades (especially kindergarten and first grade). The academic expectations of first grade are seen as conflicting with the developmental approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings in this report point to areas of concern that bear further discussion by WCPSS staff at both the central and school levels. The following recommendations and suggestions are designed as a springboard for such discussions.

EARLY INTERVENTION: Given the move toward school-based management, central staff must deal with the extent to which EPSF screening and instructional strategies are mandated districtwide. The philosophy of EPSF seems to be well accepted, the screening is valued, but implementation of EPSF strategies varies considerably. Implementation and commitment seem to be stronger at the kindergarten level than at the first grade level. The issue of whether EPSF is the most cost effective way, and the only acceptable way, to meet students' needs must be decided. One alternative would be to mandate the screening (for consistency systemwide and Chapter 1 follow-up in first grade) and allow schools some flexibility in how needs are met. Schools using alternate models could be asked to detail their plans to meet student needs and show results at least equal to those using EPSF strategies.

SUPPLIES: Nearly all (11 of 12, or 92%) kindergarten teachers are clearly concerned about insufficient funds for consumable supplies for EPSF activities such as science, cooking, and art. Principals and school staffs should consider whether and how to meet these resource needs through budget adjustments, business donations, PTA, fund raisers, parents, or other means. Teachers could also discuss ways to share non-consumable supplies.

TRAINING: Despite the limited time available for training, creative ways to provide additional ongoing training for teachers and school administrators should be explored. Topics for staff development suggested by study results are listed below.

Kindergarten: Integrating modality instruction into various curriculum areas in manageable and appropriate ways; building on the strengths of those who score well in the EPSF screening.

First Grade: The importance of follow-up with the many students who enter first grade with continuing needs; more information on how EPSF can help them meet these needs; their role in the WCPSS vision of early childhood; the role of developmental and academic orientations at the first grade level; ways to share materials effectively.

Building and Central Office Administrators: Observation, monitoring, and evaluation techniques; refresher on EPSF goals and methodology.

Parents: Overview on EPSF goals and strategies; the importance of their involvement and the type of involvement expected; WCPSS philosophy on early childhood.

MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP: Standards for the kind of progress that might be expected by the end of kindergarten and first grade should be determined, and success should be monitored more closely by teachers, principals, and central staff. Efforts are being considered centrally to improve the district's ability to track student progress and success overall.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REPORT SUMMARY i
BACKGROUND i
MAJOR FINDINGS ii
RECOMMENDATIONS iii

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION 1

EVALUATION DESIGN 2
INTERVIEWS ON CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION 2
SURVEYS 3
SCREENING RESULTS 3

EVALUATION RESULTS 4
TRAINING 4
Survey Results 5
Interview Results 6
SCREENING 7
Survey Results 8
Interview Results 8
KINDERGARTEN INSTRUCTION 9
Survey Results 10
Interview Results 11
Screening Results 14
EPSF AND THE FIRST GRADE 15
Interview Results 15
PRINCIPALS' ROLE IN EPSF 17
Interview Results 18
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF EPSF 19
Survey Results 19
Interview Results 20
THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM 24
Interview Results 24

ATTACHMENTS
1 SURVEY RESULTS 29
2 EPSF STRUCTURED INTERVIEW RESPONSES--PRINCIPALS 33
3 EPSF STRUCTURED INTERVIEW RESPONSES
KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE TEACHERS 40

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) is a nationally validated program that is designed to prevent school failure by identifying the developmental levels and learning styles of children four to six years of age. The program uses a professional team of classroom teachers and school specialists to screen, confer about, and plan developmental activities for each identified child with "needs."

The interpretation of screening information is matched to curriculum resources and teaching strategies so teachers can provide an appropriate plan of action for children with identified learning needs. Materials and teaching strategies are also provided for the average and advanced children to be used by teachers and parents. EPSF training is provided for teachers and administrators.

The Wake County School System began phasing the EPSF program into the schools in 1986-87. All schools in the district are now using EPSF. Program components are listed below.

Team Screening: All incoming kindergarten students are screened by a team of school professionals in five mandatory areas: language, auditory, visual, fine motor, and gross motor. Students with needs in two or more areas are served through special modality instruction. Progress is checked by retesting in spring.

Team Conference: Observations, screening scores, results of criterion referenced items, and parent information are compiled and evaluated. Individual educational recommendations are made regarding learning styles and special needs.

Educational Planning: Using the recommendations emerging from the conference, the teachers plan to meet the needs of each child in the classroom. Resources for instruction and management are provided.

Direct Modality Instruction: Program recommendations include 10-20 minutes of daily instruction for groups with identified needs. A management system format is provided for record keeping as children practice and master the skills.

Parent Involvement: Parents are encouraged to become informed about the program and to volunteer in the classroom. They are also provided specific and practical activities to use in working with their children at home.

Follow-up: First grade teachers are to follow up with students who continue to have needs after kindergarten. One set of EPSF materials per school has been supplied at the first grade level.

EVALUATION DESIGN

The Department of Evaluation and Research (E&R) is evaluating the Early Prevention of School Failure program as a response to a request made in the summer of 1990 by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. The study focuses on the implementation and effectiveness of this program, which operates in all Wake County public schools. Several sources of information are being utilized for the EPSF evaluation. Results will be reported in two phases because all analyses will not be completed until late fall and E&R has received several requests for those results already available.

- This first report on EPSF's implementation and effectiveness is based on structured interviews and survey data to assess current satisfaction with the program. Screening results from 1990-91 are provided for context.

- A longitudinal evaluation of the effectiveness of EPSF will be based a comparison of the progress of kindergartners served in EPSF in 1987-88 in four schools versus students in comparison schools which had not yet implemented the program at that time (using retention rates, test scores, and other quantitative data). This study is scheduled to be completed by December, 1991.

Readers are cautioned to avoid making final judgments based solely on this first report, which is based largely on survey and interview data. A more complete picture will be available later this fall when quantitative data on students' performance in school after EPSF will be available.

INTERVIEWS ON CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION

Staff members at ten elementary schools were interviewed regarding the effectiveness of EPSF by a consultant, Joyce D. Zeh, former language arts coordinator for WCPSS. Two schools were chosen as pilot sites, with principals and pre-school, kindergarten, and first grade teachers interviewed using a broad, unstructured approach. Structured interviews were then developed and reviewed centrally. A random sample of 8 of the other 52 elementary schools (15%) were selected for these structured interviews. At each school, either the principal and a randomly selected kindergarten teacher or one kindergarten and one first grade teacher were interviewed. The number of staff interviewed at the pilot and random sites is shown in Figure 1. Overall, 6 principals, 1 preschool, 15 kindergarten, and 8 first grade teachers were involved. All interviews took place at the school campuses. Some schools in this study were among the first to implement EPSF and others were added more recently. Schools involved included Aversboro, Brentwood, Conn, Fuquay, Lynn Road, Kingswood, Poe, Stough, Washington, and Zebulon elementaries. Staff members were apprised that their individual responses would be kept confidential, but that group responses would be valuable in determining overall program effectiveness and future directions for

EPSF. All were cooperative and accommodating in the evaluation process.

Figure 1
School Staff Interviewed for EPSF Evaluation

Position	Pilot	Random	Total
Principal	2	4	6
Pre-school Teacher	1	0	1
Kindergarten Teachers	3	12	15
First Grade Teachers	4	4	8
Total	10	20	30

SURVEYS

On a districtwide teacher survey in May, all kindergarten teachers were asked to respond anonymously to 14 items related to EPSF. The items, developed by the E&R staff and the consultant, were reviewed by project staff. Overall, 181 of 225 teachers responded (80%).

SCREENING RESULTS

All kindergarten students are screened by the end of September with a battery of tests covering five areas--language, gross motor, fine motor, auditory, and visual skills. Students identified with considerable or moderate needs in two or more areas are targeted for special help throughout the year ("needs students"). These students are then retested in the spring to check progress. The Program Specialist for Early Childhood and the Director of Evaluation and Testing reviewed results for the 40 schools who had turned in records as of June 7 to determine the number and percentage of kindergarten students identified with considerable and moderate needs in two or more areas in the fall and spring.

The data provided by schools was somewhat limited because it did not indicate whether students had considerable or moderate needs separately for each area, nor the number of areas in which students have needs. Thus, if students have considerable needs in all five areas, they could make considerable progress and still show up in the needs category. Likewise, progress from "considerable" to "moderate" need within an area was not reflected by the records.

EVALUATION RESULTS

"With EPSF I don't do anything that different, but I put the children with the greatest needs at the front of the line."

A teacher's comment to her principal

Full documentation on survey and interview data is found in Attachments 1-3; the most important responses and comments have been highlighted in this section. Survey responses are based on 181 (80%) of the 225 kindergarten teachers in WCPSS. Tabulated responses to interview questions are from all six principals and the sixteen teachers in the random sample. Open-ended comments are included from randomly selected and pilot sites, which included a total of thirty school-based participants--principals, a preschool teacher, kindergarten, and first grade teachers. Responses are expressed as range in some cases because kindergarten and first grade teachers sometimes differ in their responses.

Two points are important to keep in mind in interpreting survey and interview results.

- Both sources reflect staff opinions about EPSF and its effects. While perceptions are very important, an assessment of effectiveness should also consider more objective sources of information on the impact of EPSF on students (which will be available later this fall).

- Survey and interview data have different strengths. Survey data represent nearly all kindergarten teachers and thus are broad-based. Generalizations to all kindergarten teachers in WCPSS are therefore appropriate for the items asked. Interviews provide more detailed views on EPSF overall from a smaller group of teachers and principals. They can provide more insight into why staff believe as they do about EPSF. Generalizations must be made cautiously based on a small number of interviews. Interpreting these two sources of opinions in light of each other can therefore strengthen interpretation. The data reported here is therefore stronger as it relates to the kindergarten (for which survey and interview data is available) and less strong for first grade.

TRAINING

Kindergarten teachers, first grade teachers, and principals have received EPSF training. Some kindergarten teachers were identified as lead teachers; they received five full days of training. All kindergarten teachers and principals on board when EPSF was added at their schools received a day and a half of training. Each year, similar training is provided to new

kindergarten teachers. During May of 1990, first grade teachers were all involved in a one-day session related to their role in EPSF. One session occurred for kindergarten lead teachers specifically on EPSF in 1990-91, plus some general area meetings for all kindergarten teachers that may have touched on EPSF.

Findings Summary: Most kindergarten teachers and principals indicate that training is necessary and helpful on EPSF. Survey and interview data from kindergarten teachers seem to conflict somewhat in terms of the quality of what has been provided thus far, with survey results being quite positive and interviews more mixed. It appears from both sources that teachers would like more ongoing EPSF training and that those with the most training feel most comfortable using the approach. Some teachers (as well as principals) have missed training along the way. Monitoring EPSF has been delegated to assistant principals in some schools, and they were not involved in the formal training. The four first grade teachers interviewed either do not remember training received the previous year or see it as less-than-adequate. New first grade teachers have undoubtedly been added since that time, so additional training seems necessary. Teachers' perceptions of the adequacy of training needs further investigation.

SURVEY RESULTS

Three fourths (78%) of the 181 kindergarten teachers responding to the survey indicate they received effective training for EPSF that enhanced their ability to teach using developmentally appropriate methods; 22% are undecided or feel training was ineffective. Comments on the survey forms indicated that degree of satisfaction is linked to the amount of training received. EPSF lead teachers, who received the most training, feel very adequately prepared. However, some teachers who were new to a school after the initial training indicate receiving no formal training.

A slightly lower percentage, two thirds of the teachers, indicate they were sufficiently trained in all EPSF components. Comments on the survey provide ideas on areas in which teachers would like refreshers or training. Specific training topics most often requested relate to use of materials and books (e.g., PAC box), program implementation, and teaching methods (e.g., center and modality training, talent areas, developing receptive language). A few teachers requested help with test administration and scoring and use of the computer recordkeeping system.

Twenty teachers commented overall on their surveys about training.

Training		% of 181 Respondents			Mean
Survey Item #		SA&A*	Undecided	D&SD**	(1=SA)
#3	I have received effective EPSF training that enhanced my teaching of developmental modeling skills.	78.5%	10.2%	11.3%	2.05
#4	I am sufficiently trained in all components of the EPSF program.	69.1%	15.2%	15.8%	2.26
#7	I learned new instructional management skills through EPSF.	45.6%	23.3%	31.1%	2.31

*Agree plus strongly agree **Disagree plus strongly disagree.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

Two thirds (66% or 12) of the 18 kindergarten teachers and principals interviewed indicate EPSF is worth the time spent for training. However, when asked to evaluate the quality of the training, only 36% of the principals and teachers consider the quality good. One third of the principals and kindergarten teachers view the training as less-than-adequate. First grade teachers are the most critical group in response to this question.

While training was provided to first grade teachers in May of 1990, half of the first grade teachers interviewed indicate training was inadequate; and half indicate they were not trained. The reason half answer they were not trained is puzzling and contradicts program records. However, it seems logical to infer that training did not have enough impact for teachers to remember the quality 10 months later. If that is the case, the likelihood they are applying what they learned is questionable.

Most comments indicate a desire for more ongoing inservice. Some suggest sharing sessions that include kindergarten and first grade teachers meeting together. The local plan for initial training usually involves two days, yet the program specialist and one of the lead teachers interviewed believe that the program works best after five days of training. Both endorse an in-depth teacher training experience and regularly scheduled follow-up meetings. The lack of time to provide more training is cited as the preventing factor.

Interview Question: Is EPSF worth the time spent for training?	Yes	No	Unsure	Representative Comments:
Principals (N=6)	66%	17%	17%	*"Maybe, but it should be ongoing."*
				"The evaluation strategies were very helpful."
Kindergarten (N=12)	66%	17%	17%	*"...too much too quickly."*
				"..adequate...need more follow-up."

Interview Question: How would you evaluate the training you received for EPSF?	Good	Adequate	Less than Adequate	Had no Training
Principals (N=6)	33% (2)	17% (1)	33% (2)	17% (1)
Kindergarten (N=12)	50% (6)	8% (1)	33% (4)	8% (1)
First Grade (N=4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	50% (2)	50% (2)
Total	36% (8)	9% (2)	36% (8)	18% (4)

SCREENING

All kindergarten students in WCPSS have been screened with a battery of tests late each September (as prescribed by EPSF and the National Diffusion Network [NDN] evaluation guidelines). Interview and survey questions address the value of the screening as well as its timing. The National Diffusion Network constraints on timing no longer apply, because the NDN evaluation in now complete. The timing of WCPSS screening could therefore be adjusted. Students with two or more areas of particular need are provided special assistance and retested in spring.

Findings Summary: The kindergarten teachers interviewed share very positive views on the value of the EPSF screening, with 11 of 12 (92%) indicating it is worth the time spent. Principals' views are mixed, with 3 of 6 indicating it is worth the time. Most teachers surveyed (74%) see posttest scores as reflective of student progress.

Survey results reveal clearly mixed opinions on the timing of the screening, with 54% agreeing it should occur during the school year and 46% disagreeing or undecided. Most of those who commented on timing (in both the interview and surveys) favor earlier screening.

SURVEY RESULTS

Most teachers surveyed (81% and 74%) agree that substitute teachers are useful for screening and that posttest results represent student progress. A smaller percentage, 54%, agree testing should occur during the year. Overall, 23 teachers provided comments. Over half of the teachers commenting (13) request screening students in August before school starts in order to avoid lost instructional time, to avoid teaching classes by substitutes while regular teachers give screening tests, and to allow placement of students for appropriate instruction. Two teachers, however, comment earlier screening is not wise. Four teachers believe they can identify the same strengths and weaknesses without the screening and that time might be better spent on instruction. Two teachers indicate receptive language scores based on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test are too low and do not reflect student progress adequately.

Screening		% of Respondents			Mean
Survey Item #		SA&A*	Undecided	D&SD**	(1=SA)
#9	Screening for EPSF should occur during the regular school year.	54.2%	13.4%	32.4%	2.71
#10	Use of substitute teachers is a good way to accomplish testing for EPSF.	80.6%	6.1%	13.3%	1.86
#13	Posttest results reflect the progress I have seen in students' classwork.	74.0%	12.2%	13.8%	2.22

*Agree plus strongly agree **Disagree plus strongly disagree

INTERVIEW RESULTS

The EPSF screening process is viewed very positively by kindergarten teachers interviewed, with 11 of 12 (92%) indicating it is worth the time spent on this activity. Teachers find the

information provided valuable in working with the children as well as with parents. Principals' views of screening are more mixed, with 3 of 6 (50%) indicating it is worth the time.

Interview Question: Is EPSF worth the time spent for screening?	Yes	No	Unsure	Representative Comments
Principals N=6	50% (3)	17% (1)	33% (2)	*"Yes. It allows teachers to provide appropriate instruction early in the year."*
Kindergarten N=12	92% (11)	8% (1)		*"It gives us more information on the child than we have ever had."*
				"Yes, but it's a wearying experience for children and teachers."
				"It gives me greater credibility with parents."
				"Yes, for the lower children."

KINDERGARTEN INSTRUCTION

Findings Summary: Three fourths of the kindergarten teachers surveyed indicate they incorporated modality instruction daily for EPSF students. Teachers' definitions of "incorporating modality instruction" appear to vary, in that interviews reveal great differences in the extent to which specific EPSF activities and separate modality groups were utilized. Comments from both surveys and interviews indicate modality instruction is seen as most workable when integrated into regular classroom activities. Activities to address needs sometimes came from EPSF and sometimes did not; EPSF activities are seen as one of many ways to meet students' modality needs.

Among the 12 kindergarten teachers interviewed, EPSF materials are seen as quite adequate, but assistance in terms of personnel and consumable supplies (especially) are seen as major needs. The six principals interviewed do not perceive needs in any of these areas.

At least 1,500 students were identified as having moderate or considerable needs in two or more areas in the fall; at least 900 (60%) continued to show this level of need in the spring. While kindergarten instruction appears to have an impact, many students continue to have substantial needs as they enter first grade.

SURVEY RESULTS

Nearly all (99%) of the kindergarten teachers responding utilized a variety of learning centers daily. Most kindergarten teachers (80%) consider EPSF materials effective and indicate they used them regularly. Three fourths report incorporating modality instruction daily for EPSF students. Many of the 18 teachers who provided comments indicate that EPSF strategies are only one of many ways to meet these students' needs. Two sample comments are listed below.

"EPSF is a good screening device; it is good for beginning teachers to use. However, a center-oriented kindergarten classroom, using appropriate K-level techniques, should not be required to use the task cards and fill out a weekly sheet to teach K-goals. These children will progress naturally without all the added paperwork and will pull up test scores in the spring anyway."
Teacher Comment

"While I do not pull students, my activities include activities that are comparable to, or exceed the quality of, modality instruction found in EPSF materials. These materials are provided to all students on a daily basis."
Teacher Comment

About two thirds (64%) of the kindergarten teachers report actively involving parents this past year. In their comments on the survey, two teachers note sending home EPSF activities weekly; two others note working with parents, but not necessarily with EPSF activities.

Instruction		% of 181 Respondents			Mean
Survey Item #		SA&A*	Undecided	D&SD**	SA=1
#5	I consistently incorporate modality instruction for my EPSF students 10-20 minutes per day.	75.0%	6.1%	18.9%	2.31
#14	I consistently use a variety of learning centers in my instruction each day.	98.9%	0.0%	1.1%	1.25
#11	EPSF materials are effective with different populations of students.	81.0%	12.3%	6.7%	2.03
#12	I use EPSF materials on a regular basis.	80.5%	4.4%	15.0%	2.15
#6	I have actively involved parents in EPSF this year.	64.4%	9.6%	26.0%	2.46

*Agree plus strongly agree **Disagree plus strongly disagree

INTERVIEW RESULTS

Is EPSF worth the time spent on instruction?

Views on whether EPSF is worth the time for instruction are clearly mixed, with half of the 18 staff interviewed agreeing and half disagreeing. Three fourths of the kindergarten teachers find the EPSF strategies manageable only by integrating the activities into curriculum areas--centers, units, and content. EPSF does indicate this is one acceptable model for implementation, but all teachers do not seem to understand this. Those who are continuing to pull separate modality groups usually have volunteers, but they speak of the frustrations of a segmented day. Magnet schools have designed electives to address the "moderate to considerable needs" children. That is viewed as a plus for students and teachers alike.

Interview Question: Is EPSF worth the time spent on instruction?	Yes	No	Unsure	Representative Comments
Principals N=6	33% (2)	17% (1)	50% (3)	*"I'm not sure. I hope so."* *"It requires too much time for the observed outcomes."*
Kindergarten N=12	58%* (7)	42%* (5)		*17% percent who answered "yes" said, *"Only when it is incorporated into the regular curriculum."* In addition, 17% who answered "no" qualified their responses to indicate some agreement when modality training could be integrated. *"Not daily."* *"Not really."* *"Yes, but it's not different from what I did before."* *"...were told the EPSF program required about 20 minutes per day. Actually it took 30 minutes from beginning to end. I could not get everything in. Now that the integration of EPSF strategies has been approved, it's better."* *"I use little of EPSF per se. Our program is much better."*
Total N=18	50% (9)	33% (6)	17% (3)	

How do you schedule the EPSF modality strategies into your daily routine?

(Kindergarten Only)

Integrated into general curriculum and in centers	75%
Irregularly	17%
During rest time	17%
Peer tutoring	8%
"Sometimes during Writing to Read."	17%

Representative Comments:

"In centers." (66.7%)

"In the afternoon, but they're often pushed aside."

"During rest time." (16.7%)

"Irregularly. It slips and slides!"

Is EPSF worth the time spent on paperwork?

When asked whether EPSF paperwork was worth the time spent, 9 of 12 kindergarten teachers agree (67%) but only 2 of 6 (33%) principals do. Paperwork does not appear to be a major frustration with respondents.

Interview Question: Is EPSF worth the time spent on Paperwork?	Yes	No	Unsure	Representative Comments
Principals N=6	33%	33%	33%	*"Not for all children." (Paperwork did not appear to be a significant issue with interviewees.)*
Kindergarten N=12	67%	33%	0%	*"Yes, the way I've adapted it."* *"Sometimes, but not usually."*

Do schools have adequate personnel, materials, and supplies to implement the EPSF program? (Kindergarten Teachers and Principals)

Principals and kindergarten teachers agree that EPSF materials were adequate, but disagreed regarding the adequacy of personnel and supplies.

- Principals without exception express satisfaction with personnel available for EPSF. Two thirds of the kindergarten teachers, on the other hand, state a need for more assistance with the program. Teachers who had daily volunteers give no indication of dissatisfaction with the personnel available.

- Kindergarten teachers and principals agree that an adequate amount of printed materials have been provided for EPSF. Only one teacher complains that too much time was required for making materials.

- The issue of supplies elicited the most agitated response of any question during the interviews. Only one kindergarten teacher says she had adequate supplies, but she also stated that she had fewer now than in the past. It is noteworthy that five of the six the principals do not see a problem with supplies, while 91.7% of the kindergarten teachers discuss the issue extensively, emphasizing many needs.

Question: Have you had adequate personnel, materials, and supplies to implement EPSF?

Personnel	Yes	No	Representative Comments
Principals	100%	0%	
Kindergarten	33%	67%	*"With the screening, yes-but not in the classroom."* *"We need more personnel..."* *"No. We have a lack of volunteers this year."* *"I need more parent volunteers to help with my groups."*
Materials	Yes	No	Representative Comments
Principals	100%	0%	
Kindergarten	92%	8%	

Supplies	Yes	No	Representative Comments
Principals	83%	17%	
Kindergarten	8%	92%	*"We beg! This is a real problem area..."* *"I have spent $900 (of my own money) this year for supplies, and I have kept the receipts. I have a teacher friend who has spent $1500, but I just can't afford that."* *"I spend about $30 each weekend on supplies for my class."* *"I have spent $450 for pens, markers, soil, seeds, cups, tissues, and other things this year."* *"I'm not the only one. We all buy supplies for the kindergarten program. It's easy to spend a lot of money for supplies."*
Items bought: games ping-pong balls glue water colors cooking supplies crayons soil tissues dishpans science supplies cups paint newsprint pens/markers seeds snacks for children who can't bring them			

SCREENING RESULTS

Kindergarten screening results from the 40 schools who had sent in records as of June 7 (a few schools had no identified students and a few were late) revealed that:

- Overall, 1,510 students were identified with considerable and moderate needs in two or more areas in the fall (27.3% of the 5,539 kindergartners enrolled).
- As of spring, 923 of the 1,510 (61%) continued to have considerable or moderate needs in two or more areas (16.7% of the kindergarten enrollment).

Thus, 39% of those identified had shown enough progress to show average status or above in at least 4 of the 5 categories.

These results must be interpreted cautiously, in that they may not reflect substantial progress made by students with needs in more than two areas or very severe needs in specific areas (more precise ways to track progress are under consideration for 1991-92). However, they

also indicate that EPSF does not ameliorate all needs in one year, and follow-up at grade 1 is very important.

EPSF AND THE FIRST GRADE

The EPSF program is designed for first grade teachers to provide follow-up services to students with continuing needs in two or more areas based on spring screening in kindergarten. Spring screening results show that two-thirds of students who were screened in the fall, need to continue modality instruction in the first grade. This translates to approximately 900 (6.6%) of the typical 5,400 first graders enrolled.

Findings Summary: Most of the first grade teachers interviewed are generally aware of EPSF and the instructional component, but they do not view the program as a viable part of the year-long curriculum. Kindergarten posttest information is used at the beginning of the year in some cases to establish reading and other instructional groups and in the selection of appropriate instructional materials. The posttest information also helps in the selection of elective courses for the "needs" children in the magnet schools. The EPSF strategies, if used, are generally provided by the teacher assistant.

There is little coordination between the kindergarten and first grade among the schools in the random sample based on teacher and principal interviews. Principals state that, while they can see some differences in the classroom environment of first grades since EPSF, the first grade curriculum has not been affected to the desired degree.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

Do you regularly schedule EPSF strategies into your instructional routine?

(First grade only)

No: 100% (6)

Representative Comments:

"No, I'm not conscious of the EPSF plan, but I am aware of the "needs" students."

"Not in my classroom, but more in the electives."

Interview Question: Do you find it difficult to schedule EPSF modality groups? (K&G1 only)	Yes	No	Not when integrated	Representative Comments:
Kindergarten	25%	0%	75%	*"I try to do this during rest time, but often the children who need the instruction most fall asleep."* *"No, not when skills can be integrated."* *"Yes, but not as it is incorporated at center time using my own ideas."*
First grade	25%	75%	0%	*"I just don't think, 'Now it's time for EPSF.'"* *"Yes, my assistant does this in small groups and one-to-one."*

Are the "needs" students from kindergarten flagged in the permanent folder or in another way for easy identification? (First grade teachers)

No: 50% (2) *"I have used my own ways of identification." "Not really."*
Yes: 50% (2) *"Yes, an in-depth followup in planned...special electives will be offered."*

How do you coordinate your efforts with the kindergarten teachers? (First grade teachers)

Do Not: 75% (3) *"We did not."*

Elective Planning: 25% (1) *"Only for planning electives."*

How do you follow up in first grade with students who have considerable needs? (First grade teachers)

Assistants uses the PAC BOX activities during center time	50% (2)
Parent volunteers	25% (1)
Choosing electives	25% (1)
More peer tutoring	25% (1)
Use it at the first of the year	25% (1)

How have your first grade teachers utilized the EPSF posttest information? (Principals)

"In the beginning there was real resistance, but now they all use the data."

"I have no idea."

"Not much"

"They have used it to set up instructional groups. They work closely with the kindergarten teachers. The assistant principal takes care of this."

"They haven't really."

"They are using it. My assistant has pushed it."

How have you used the EPSF posttest results from kindergarten? (First grade teachers)

Grouping and seating	50% (2)
Awareness of students with special needs	50% (2)
Assistant uses the posttest information	25% (1)

PRINCIPALS' ROLE IN EPSF

Findings Summary: The following four leadership training questions were designed to determine the level of confidence and the needs principals have in working with EPSF. In response to these questions, principals express general comfort with the philosophy and goals of the program, but some needs they mention suggest that additional program support for leadership proficiency would be helpful.

Retraining is an area mentioned often, and there is indication that in-service for principals should address observation and evaluation strategies.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

Do you feel able to work with your staff with EPSF instruction? (Principals Only)

Yes: 67% (3) No: 33% (1)

Representative Comments:

"Not really."

"I don't see it separately."

"No, but my assistant principal really knows the program."

"Yes. Good instruction is good instruction."

Do you feel comfortable evaluating your teachers' EPSF instruction?

Yes: 67% No: 33%

Representative Comments:

"Again, I don't see it separately."

"Not totally."

"Yes. I was one of the first pilots. I had to know the program... The evaluation strategies were very helpful."

What are your needs with the EPSF program?

"Evaluation strategies."

"Knowledge of EPSF's long-term outcomes--How has it affected dropout rates in early pilot sites?"

"Test interpretation."

"Retraining with emphasis on the developmental philosophy for teachers and the principal."

"More on-site visitation."

"More money for consumable materials."

Have you requested and received additional help for your teachers this year?

	Yes	No	
Requested:	17%* (1)	83% (5)	*Requested help twice; received once.
Received:	17%*	0%	

Representative Comments:

"I requested and arrangements were made for a new teacher to visit another school to observe, and I twice requested an on-site observation for a veteran teacher having difficulty. I received no response to the telephone request or the written request."

"I would have requested help if there had not been a trainer on the staff. (Three of the six principals)"

"I have not needed it. Brooke Bridges helped the new teacher."

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF EPSF

Findings Summary: Based on interview and survey results, most principals and kindergarten teachers agree that EPSF effectively identifies student needs. Among kindergarten teachers surveyed, 73% agree that EPSF helps to overcome skill deficiencies. However, a smaller percentage (53%) see EPSF as being as effective as in the past. Interviews indicate 59% of the 30 teachers and principals see the program as effective overall. Most respondents (82%) do not attribute outcomes directly to EPSF. Rather, modality instruction, in conjunction with kindergarten curriculum and materials, are seen as responsible for positive results.

SURVEY RESULTS

Most kindergarten teachers surveyed (over 70%) agree that EPSF effectively identifies students' strengths and weaknesses and helps students overcome skill deficiencies. A smaller percentage, 53%, believe EPSF is as effective now as in the past.

Overall Effectiveness		% of 181 Respondents			Mean
Survey Item #		A&SA*	Undecided	D&SD**	(1=SA)
#1	EPSF effectively identifies students' strengths and weaknesses.	77.7%	10.1%	12.3%	2.08
#2	EPSF helps students overcome skill deficiencies.	73.2%	18.4%	8.4%	2.18
#8	The EPSF program is as effective now as it was in previous years.	52.9%	37.8%	9.3%	2.43

*Agree plus Strongly Agree ** Disagree plus Strongly Disagree

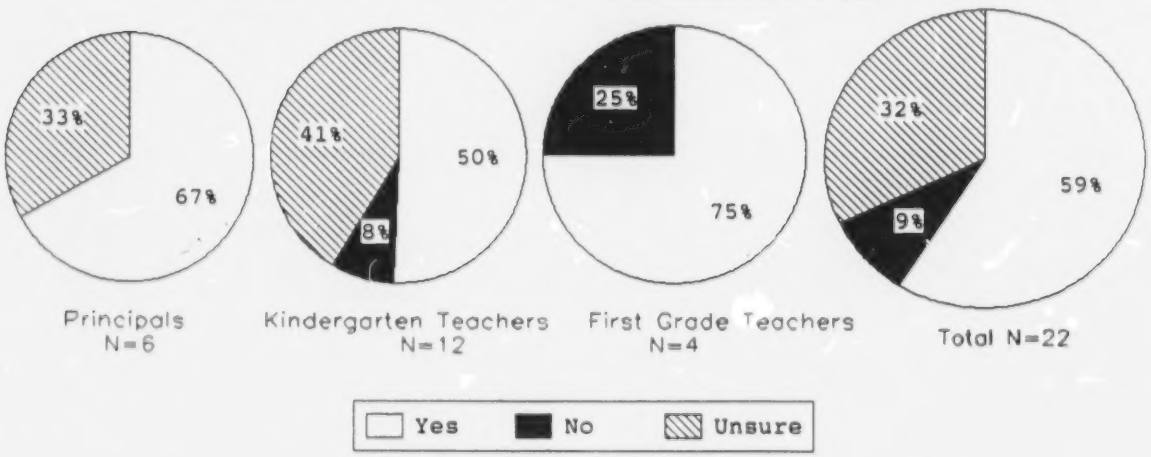
INTERVIEW RESULTS

Do you think EPSF is an effective early childhood program?

Overall, 13 of 22 staff interviewed (59%) think EPSF is effective; this reflects half the kindergarten teachers (6 of 12), two thirds of the principals (4 of 6), and three fourths of the first grade teachers (3 of 4). Nearly all express reservations or make their responses conditional. Their reservations are related to scheduling or modifying the instructional strategies, parent and/or home usefulness, and doubts that EPSF per se is responsible for improved student performance.

It is noteworthy that 33.3% of the principals and 41.7% of the kindergarten teachers are not certain of EPSF effectiveness. Some who began the program later than others indicate that it is too soon to be sure of its overall value.

Figure 2
Do you think EPSF is an effective early childhood program?



Representative Comments:

"Yes it has potential. The screening is very appropriate." (P = Principal)

"EPSF is not a program, but strategies applied for maximum implementation and success of other programs." (P)

"Yes, for testing and showing parents early needs." (K = Kindergarten Teacher)

"It really makes little difference." (G1 = First Grade Teacher)

Do you think most of the teachers in your school and in the school district view EPSF as an effective program?

Two thirds of the principals and kindergarten teachers interviewed are either unsure about or negative towards the effectiveness of EPSF in their school, with one third indicating it is effective. First grade teachers are evenly split, with 50% seeing EPSF as effective and 50% unsure or negative about effectiveness.

Only one fourth of the kindergarten and first grade teachers interviewed believe teachers in the school district overall judge the program to be effective.

School: **Do you think that most teachers in your school view EPSF as an effective program?**

School	Yes	No	Unsure	Other	Representative Comments
Principal N=6	33% (2)	0%	67% (4)	0%	*"They still have reservations toward total commitment."*
Kindergarten N=12	33% (4)	17% (2)	33% (4)	17%* (2)	*"No, it's just one more segment of the day to plan."* *"The majority do, but we don't pull modality groups."* *"Yes, but it would make little difference in our school program if it were not here."*
First Grade N=4	50% (2)	25% (1)	25% (1)	0%	

**"Just the screening." **"We're just beginning to."*

District: **Do you think that most teachers in the school district view EPSF as an effective program?** (Kindergarten and First Grade Teachers Only)

District	Yes	No	Unsure	Other	Representative Comments
Kindergarten N=12	25% (3)	25% (3)	33% (4)	17%* (2)	**"Most teachers do not follow procedures." "There are a lot of complaints about time and money, but I've heard nothing negative about the screening." "Kindergarten, maybe. First grade teachers are bookbound." "It dies at the end of kindergarten."
First Grade N=4	25% (1)	25% (1)	50% (2)	0%	"Just lukewarm." "Some do, some don't. The teachers do like getting information (posttests) back in the spring."

"Some teachers do not like EPSF. I've heard teachers who were meeting in my building say, 'waste of time,' 'I don't have time for this,' 'takes too much time from the instructional day,' 'let the assistants, volunteers, and parents take care of this.'" (P)

What outcomes have you seen from using EPSF?

Most respondents see no outcomes for children that are attributable directly to EPSF; some stated that the benefits are really for teachers in the early diagnosis of student learning needs.

Group	None	Some	Representative Comments:
Principals N=6	83% (5)	17% (1)	"None directly tied to EPSF. ...Not really as much impact as Writing to Read." "EPSF children appear more successful in first and second grade than other children who moved in."
Kindergarten N=12	75% (9)	25% (3)	"None that are directly related to EPSF. I would have done those lessons anyway." "Positive self-esteem."
First Grade N=4	100% (4)	0%	"I can see no difference in the child..." "I can't name anything."
Total N=22	82% (18)	18% (4)	

What are EPSF's strengths and weaknesses?

Early identification of students' learning needs is considered a real strength, but teachers often state that those students would have been identified anyway. Teachers frequently note that when they learn what the child's needs are, they can best meet those needs with resources **similar in purpose but different from the strategies suggested by EPSF.** Several say that the screening data gives credibility to their own assessment of students' needs when communicating with parents.

Weaknesses of EPSF are related to the great demand on teacher time. A lack of follow-up training is also viewed as a weakness. Teachers explain that they especially benefit from teacher-sharing and motivational sessions made by a variety of their peers, in addition to presentations by program specialists.

What are its strengths?	Principal N=6	Kindergarten N=12	First Grade N=4
Early identification of children with learning needs	67%	67%	75%
Parent component	33%	33%	0%
Specific instructional strategies	33%	17%	0%

Representative Comments:

"The information from fall screening is very important." (P)

"It helps pinpoint problems early, but I could have told that before." (K)

"Posttest information is helpful only at the beginning of the year." (G1)

What are its weaknesses?	Principal N=6	Kindergarten N=12	First Grade N=4
Too much time is required	33%	58%	0%
Continuing need for follow up training	68%	0%	0%

Representative Comments:

"Too much time required for both testing sessions." (P)

"Too much time is needed for the modality groups, but it's better now that we are allowed to integrate." (K)

"It takes too much time to pull in all the small groups." (K)

"With EPSF, children make slow progress." (K)

"It [pulling modality groups] *gives some children a deprived feeling." (K)*

"Needs to provide more academic information." (G1)

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

Findings Summary: All principals and a random sample of teachers were asked about concerns regarding the early childhood program in their schools and in the school district. They present a variety of concerns, but the area that draws the greatest commentary is the high academic expectations of the first grade curriculum and the pressure on first grade students for skill mastery. The incongruity of philosophy and academic expectation for kindergarten and first grade is mentioned by 42% of the kindergarten teachers, 50% of the first grade teachers, and 33% of the principals. Meeting the needs of children who are academically precocious while providing appropriate and developmentally sound instruction for the "needs" children is perceived as an onerous challenge for teachers of kindergarten and first grade. Parents' academic expectations of their children in kindergarten and first grade often may not be compatible with developmental needs. Teachers may or may not be convincing in their efforts to assist parents in adjusting expectations. In some cases, this causes anxiety for the children and for the teacher.

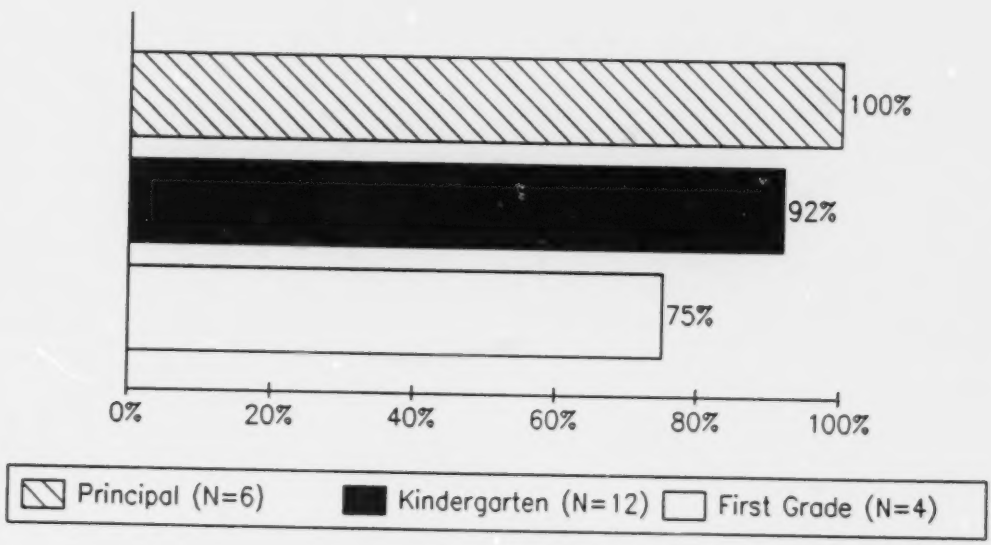
INTERVIEW RESULTS

Do the EPSF strategies support the early childhood program in your school?

The overwhelming response to this question reflects a philosophical agreement and the schools' attempts to implement programs that aim to meet the developmental needs of students. Teachers and principals in every school discuss instructional appropriateness based on evidenced needs.

Group	Yes	Unsure	Representative Comments
Principals N=6	100% (6)	0%	*"...leads to more appropriate instruction in curriculum areas."*
Kindergarten N=12	92% (11)	8% (1)	*"Yes, but I would have done them anyway, only more randomly."*
			"Yes, when they are adapted to our own style."
First Grade N=4	75% (3)	25% (1)	*"Yes, but parents are shocked by the curriculum of first grade. First grade is academic, so students find a very different setting following kindergarten. Parents have a hard time accepting that."*
			(75% of the first grade teachers, 75% of kindergarten teachers, and 67% of the principals spoke of the K-1 transition either as a response to this question or in the open comments.)

Figure 3
Percentage of "yes" responses to the question:
"Do the EPSF strategies support the early childhood program in your schools?"



Interview Question: Do you have concerns regarding the early childhood program in your school?	Yes	No	Representative Comments:
Principals	83%	17%	*"Not in my school."* *"We are perpetuating a caste system...getting behind before the child even gets into first grade. We want to change that beginning next year."* *"...but we've made progress. The first grades have finally given up workbooks."*
Kindergarten	83%	17%	*"Children become angry at the curriculum in first grade."* *"We don't really meet the needs of our K-2 children."* *"...our philosophy varies from teacher-to-teacher."*
First Grade	75%	25%	*"We need a preschool program in our school."* *"Because first grade academic requirements are so great, the transition is difficult for children."*

Interview Question: Do you have concerns regarding the early childhood program in the district?	Yes	No	Unsure	Representative Comments
Principals	100%	0%	0%	*"A stated philosophy with appropriate teacher training would help."*
Kindergarten	83%	8%	8%	*"It's time to refine the good programs that we now have and stop handing out new programs..."* *"Too many programs have been added with no dismissal of other programs; consequently, we have a fragmented early childhood program, and we're all frustrated..."* *"We have no stated philosophy (K-3). The philosophy of early childhood education varies from teacher-to-teacher."*
First Grade	75%	0%	25%	*"Kindergarten is developmental, but because first grade academic requirements are so great, the transition is difficult for first grade children. Maybe the first grade curriculum needs to be reexamined."* *"EPSF and ESAR/ESAM skills and strategies are incompatible."*

After the structured interview questions were completed, all participants were invited to make general comments. Comments on the early childhood philosophy issue were quite common. Some are therefore included here.

"There is a continuing basic struggle between a developmental and an academic philosophy for kindergarten." G1

"Wake County needs curriculum revision in kindergarten through grade two. Children need more one-to-one experiences. The current curriculum leaves little time for the child to reflect, think, and maybe write. The nurturing of relationships is very important, and there is too little time. The current curriculum, except for language arts, is just too sophisticated." K

"Our children view first grade as difficult. They come back and peek in the door or drop in after school. Children do not have enough time to play and develop and learn to think before they're given dull drills with paper and pencil. The first grade teachers are not at fault, however. They're doing what they have been told to do." K

"First grade teachers need training in the developmental stages of learning." K

91.06

ATTACHMENT 1
SURVEY RESULTS

FORM 7 -- EPSF

WCPSS TEACHER SURVEY SPRING, 1991

DIRECTIONS:
The items on this survey relate to EPSF, which is being evaluated this year by the Department of Evaluation and Research (E&R). We would appreciate your comments on the implementation and effectiveness of this program. Please fill in one bubble per item with a #2 pencil. Use the Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree scale unless another scale is listed. Skip any items that are not applicable to you. Feel free to comment on any item on the back (list the item number).

THIS SURVEY IS ANONYMOUS. Responses will only be summarized by program (indicated by the form number bubbled in column A) and grade or subject are a (coded in B). A summary of results for each item, plus comments, will be provided to project staff. Once you complete your survey, rip your name label off the envelope to protect your identity. Enclose the survey (DO NOT FOLD), attach the E&R address label, and return the survey to us through courier by May 27.

1. EPSF effectively identifies students' strengths and weaknesses.
2. EPSF helps students overcome skill deficiencies.
3. I have received effective EPSF training that enhanced my teaching of developmental modeling skills.
4. I am sufficiently trained in all components of the EPSF program. (if you disagree, please comment in Area 1 on back.)
5. I consistently incorporate modality instruction for my EPSF students 10-20 minutes per day.
6. I have actively involved parents in EPSF this year.
7. I learned new instructional management skills through EPSF.
8. The EPSF program is as effective now as it was in previous years.
9. Screening for EPSF should occur during the regular school year.
10. Use of substitute teachers is a good way to accomplish testing for EPSF.
11. EPSF materials are effective with different populations of students.
12. I use EPSF materials on a regular basis.
13. Posttest results reflect the progress I have seen in students' classwork.
14. I consistently use a variety of learning centers in my instruction each day.

:Date: 06-09-91 National Computer Systems MICROTEST Survey Release 2.0

Histogram

Total Respondents: 181 WCPSS - EPSF Subgroup Respondents: 181

Percent in tens: ....1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10

Item 1 = EPSF effectivly identifies students' strengths & weaknesses.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... **************
B = AGREE.............. **************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... *****
D = DISAGREE........... *****
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... *
```

A: 28.5% f = 51 | B: 49.2% f = 88 | C: 10.1% f = 18 | D: 10.6% f = 19 | E: 1.7% f = 3 | Mean = 2.08 Missing = 2

Item 2 = EPSF helps students overcome skill deficiencies.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... *********
B = AGREE.............. ****************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... *********
D = DISAGREE........... ****
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE...
```

A: 17.3% f = 31 | B: 55.9% f = 100 | C: 18.4% f = 33 | D: 7.8% f = 14 | E: 0.6% f = 1 | Mean = 2.18 Missing = 2

Item 3 = EPSF training enhanced my tching developmntl modelng skills.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... **************
B = AGREE.............. **************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... *****
D = DISAGREE........... ******
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE...
```

A: 28.2% f = 50 | B: 50.3% f = 89 | C: 10.2% f = 18 | D: 11.3% f = 20 | E: f = 0 | Mean = 2.05 Missing = 4

Item 4 = I'm sufficiently trained in all components of the EPSF prog.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... ***********
B = AGREE.............. ************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... ********
D = DISAGREE........... ********
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE...
```

A: 21.3% f = 38 | B: 47.8% f = 85 | C: 15.2% f = 27 | D: 15.2% f = 27 | E: 0.6% f = 1 | Mean = 2.26 Missing = 3

Date: 06-09-91

Percent in tens: ....1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10

Item 5 = I consistntly incrprte modality intrctn for my EPSF stdnts.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... *******
B = AGREE.............. ********************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... ***
D = DISAGREE........... *********
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... *
```

A: 14.4% f = 26 | B: 60.6% f = 109 | C: 6.1% f = 11 | D: 17.2% f = 31 | E: 1.7% f = 3 | Mean = 2.31 Missing = 1

Item 6 = I have actively involved parents in EPSF this year.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... **********
B = AGREE.............. ************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... *****
D = DISAGREE........... ***********
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... **
```

A: 20.3% f = 36 | B: 44.1% f = 78 | C: 9.6% f = 17 | D: 21.5% f = 38 | E: 4.5% f = 8 | Mean = 2.46 Missing = 4

Item 7 = I learned new instructional management skills through EPSF.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... ***
B = AGREE.............. ********************
C = UNDECIDED.......... ************
D = DISAGREE........... **************
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... **
```

A: 6.7% f = 12 | B: 38.9% f = 70 | C: 23.3% f = 42 | D: 27.2% f = 49 | E: 3.9% f = 7 | Mean = 2.83 Missing = 1

Item 8 = The program is as effective now as it was in previous years.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... ********
B = AGREE.............. ********************
C = UNDECIDED.......... ********************
D = DISAGREE........... ****
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... *
```

A: 15.1% f = 26 | B: 37.8% f = 65 | C: 37.8% f = 65 | D: 7.6% f = 13 | E: 1.7% f = 3 | Mean = 2.43 Missing = 9

Date: 06-09-91

Percent in tens: ....1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10

Item 9 = Screening for EPSF should occur durng the regular school yr.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... ***********
B = AGREE.............. ****************
C = UNDECIDED.......... *******
D = DISAGREE........... *********
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... *******
```

A: 21.2%	B: 33.0%	C: 13.4%	D: 18.4%	E: 14.0%	Mean = 2.71
f = 38	f = 59	f = 24	f = 33	f = 25	Missing = 2

Item 10 = Substitute teachers is a gd way to accmplsh tsting fr EPSF.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... ***************************
B = AGREE.............. ************
C = UNDECIDED.......... ***
D = DISAGREE........... ***
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... ****
```

A: 53.9%	B: 26.7%	C: 6.1%	D: 6.1%	E: 7.2%	Mean = 1.86
f = 97	f = 48	f = 11	f = 11	f = 13	Missing = 1

Item 11 = EPSF materials are effective with diff populatns of studnts.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... ***********
B = AGREE.............. ****************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... ******
D = DISAGREE........... **
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... *
```

A: 24.6%	B: 56.4%	C: 12.3%	D: 4.5%	E: 2.2%	Mean = 2.03
f = 44	f = 101	f = 22	f = 8	f = 4	Missing = 2

Item 12 = I use EPSF materials on a regular basis.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... ***********
B = AGREE.............. ******************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... **
D = DISAGREE........... *******
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... *
```

A: 21.1%	B: 59.4%	C: 4.4%	D: 13.3%	E: 1.7%	Mean = 2.15
f = 38	f = 107	f = 8	f = 24	f = 3	Missing = 1

Item 13 = Posttest results reflect the progress in studnts' classwork.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... **********
B = AGREE.............. ***************************
C = UNDECIDED.......... ******
D = DISAGREE........... ******
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... *
```

A: 20.4%	B: 53.6%	C: 12.2%	D: 11.0%	E: 2.8%	Mean = 2.22
f = 37	f = 97	f = 22	f = 20	f = 5	Missing = 0

Item 14 = I consstntly use a variety of lrning cntrs in my instrction.

```
A = STRONGLY AGREE..... ****************************************
B = AGREE.............. **********
C = UNDECIDED.......... 
D = DISAGREE........... 
E = STRONGLY DISAGREE... *
```

A: 77.9%	B: 21.0%	C:	D:	E: 1.1%	Mean = 1.25
f = 141	f = 38	f = 0	f = 0	f = 2	Missing = 0

ATTACHMENT 2
EPSF STRUCTURED INTERVIEW RESPONSES--PRINCIPALS

The tabulated responses and the comments are from all six principals involved in the study, including the two principals who served in an advisory capacity and four from the random sample. Quoted responses are representative but do not include all comments made during the interviews.

"With EPSF I don't do anything that different, but I just put the children with the greatest needs at the front of the line."

A teacher's comment to her principal

Question 1: **Do you think EPSF is an effective early children program?**

Yes:	66.7%
No:	0.0%
Unsure:	33.3%

Question 2: **What are its strengths?**

66.7%	Early identification of children with specific needs
33.3%	Promotes developmental learning approach
33.3%	Parent component
33.3%	Specific instructional activities are recommended
16.7%	Screening involves all school specialists
16.7%	Encourages more success for students
16.7%	Makes better use of school specialists
16.7%	EPSF, while not a stand-alone program, does offer strategies that may be applied for maximum implementation and success of other programs.
16.0%	Good teacher training that refreshes the knowledge of the developmental stages of learning

Question 3: **What are its weaknesses?**

66.7%	Continuing need for follow-up training
33.3%	Time requirement for screening and posttest
16.7%	Short period of screening data validity due to rapid changes in the development of young children
16.7%	No special help for administrators
16.7%	Needs more central control and supervision
16.7%	Inconsistent implementation at the school level
16.7%	Too much time required for resulting outcomes
16.7%	Print material not worth the cost

Question 4: **Do you feel that most of the teachers in your school view EPSF as an effective program?**

Yes:	66.7%
No:	16.7%
Unsure:	16.7%

"The beneficial effects of the training depend on the competency of the individual teacher. Some really do need it, while others do not."

Question 5: **Is EPSF worth the time required for screening?**

Yes:	50.0%
No:	16.7%
Unsure:	33.3%

"The screening is as good but no better than some other kindergarten screening that we have used, the Santa Clara for instance."

Question 6: **Is EPSF worth the time required for paperwork?**

Yes:	33.3%
No:	33.3%
Unsure:	33.3%

Question 7: **Is EPSF worth the time required for instruction?**

Yes: 33.3%
No: 16.7%
Unsure: 50%

"It is worth the time required for instruction only if it is integrated into the general curriculum." (Three principals)

Question 8: **What outcomes have you seen from using the EPSF program?**

83.3% *"None that were directly tied to EPSF"*
"...haven't seen any really."
"None"
"I cannot say I've seen any."
"I have no evidence that there's been any difference."

16.7% *"EPSF children appear more successful in first and second grade than other children who moved in."*

Question 9: **Do the strategies of EPSF support the early childhood program in your school?**

Yes: 100%

Question 10: **Do you think that most of the teachers in your school view EPSF as an effective program?**

Yes: 33.3% *"Kindergarten teachers do."*
No: 0.0%
Unsure: 66.7% *"Some do, some don't," "I think so, but I'm not sure," "They're ambivalent," "50/50 maybe," "They still have reservations toward total commitment."*

Question 11: **How would you evaluate the training you received for EPSF?**

Good:	33.3%	*"The evaluation strategies were very helpful."*
Adequate:	16.7%	
Less than adequate:	50.0%	*"Superficial"* 2 principals, *"Inadequate", "Too much about the mechanics and not enough philosophy."* 2 principals, *"The training was offered but due to the other departmental meetings, I could not attend."*

Question 12: **Do you feel able to work with your staff in this area?**

Yes:	66.7%
No.:	33.3%

Question 13: **Do you feel comfortable in evaluating their EPSF instruction? If not, what are your needs?**

Yes:	50%	
No:	0%	
Other:	50%	*"Not totally," "Don't see it separately," "I can recognize good and appropriate instruction."*

Needs:
- Test interpretation
- Knowledge of EPSF's long term outcomes
- How it has affected dropout rates (Initial pilot sites)
- Retraining with emphasis on developmental philosophy
- Evaluation strategies

Question 14: **Have you requested and received additional help for your teachers this year?**

Requested:		
Yes:	16.7%	
No:	83.3%	
Received:	16.7%*	*Requested twice, received once.

(1) Arrangements were made for a new teacher to visit another school to observe.

(3) Would have requested help if there had not been an EPSF trainer on the staff.

(1) Requested an on-site observation for veteran teacher having difficulty (twice); received no response.

Question 15: **In what ways have you seen the integration of EPSF strategies in the various curriculum areas of kindergarten and first grade?**

Kindergarten

"I know it's happening, but I can't identify that which is totally EPSF."
"Language arts"
Centers...
"They're integrated so well they're not noticeable."
More use of manipulatives...
Electives have been designed to help the "needs" students.

First grade

"More centers now"
"Have not seen it"
"Cannot identify that which is totally EPSF"
"Little in first grade"
"Has not affected first grade"
"More math manipulatives"

Question 16: **How have your first grade teachers utilized the EPSF posttest information?**

"In the beginning there was real resistance, but now they all use the data."
"I have no idea"
"Not much"
"They have used it to set up instructional groups. They work closely with the kindergarten teachers. The assistant principal takes care of this."
"They haven't really."
"They are using it. My assistant has pushed it."

Question 17: **Have you had adequate personnel to implement EPSF as you wish in your school?**

Yes: 100%

Question 18: **Have you had adequate materials to implement EPSF?**

Yes: 100%

Question 19: **Have you had adequate supplies to implement EPSF?**

Yes: 83.3%
No: 16.7%

"The situation for supplies this year has been awful. There will be a definite change next year."

Question 20: **Do you have concerns regarding the early childhood program in your school?**

"We've made good progress, but we are still working on it."

"Not in my school..."

"First and second grade teachers need more training in early childhood, but we've made progress. The first grades have finally given up workbooks."

"Yes, a better transition is needed between kindergarten and first grade. The academic expectations are too high at first grade."

"We are perpetuating a caste system...getting behind before the child even gets into first grade. We want to change that beginning next year."

Question 21: **Do you have concerns regarding the early childhood program in the district?**

"Some teachers do not like EPSF. I've heard teachers meeting in my building say, 'waste of time,' ' I don't have time for this.' 'Takes too much time from the instructional day,' 'Let the assistants, volunteers, and parents take care of this.'"

"Outside assistance would be helpful. I guess they'd come if asked."

"The slow processing of students with extreme needs is detrimental to the student and to the rest of the class."

"ESAR testing puts pressure on first grade teachers. It puts undue pressure on everybody."

"We need stability of program even beyond early childhood...developmental in nature...beyond skills building."

"We are reactive rather than pro-active. We've taught parents to expect seats, independent work, and paper and pencil. The early childhood program should be developmentally appropriate. We're not doing that now. Teachers feel driven and compelled. We're forcing children to do that which is not developmentally sound."

"Wake County needs to state and define a basic and acceptable philosophy of K-2 education. The district needs to address developmental and academic expectations. There should be more commonality among kindergartens---screening data, performance evaluations, etc."

"A stated philosophy with appropriate teacher training would help."

"Wake County should have a basic philosophical statement regarding early childhood education. The should be basic common characteristics of classes so that students who transfer from one school to another would have greater continuity in their educational experiences."

"The district does not have the needed continuity among schools."

Question 22: **Are there additional comments you wish to make?**

"Too much time is required for EPSF for the observed outcomes."

"We've added too many new programs without formally dismissing others."

"If Wake County is going to hold schools accountable, then the parameters must be well defined. New programs need time and space. Optional programs should be so designated."

"No program has had the positive effect on the total child in kindergarten and first grade as Writing to Read." The EPSF modality instruction may be easily integrated into that setting."

"Writing to Read has had the greatest influence on educational development. Computer instruction creates opportunity for greater computability among students, and this is based on repeated observations. ...fewer behavior problems and conflicts in the lab." (Increased school enrollment and building construction interrupted Writing to Read during the past two years.)

"More preschools are needed. Even day-care is a positive factor in our area."

---

* *Several teachers and principals commented favorable on the Writing to Read program. An increasing body of research indicates that the program is not as effective as it was once touted to be. Their comments are included here as an indicator of their concerns and, in some cases, misconceptions about the district's "endorsement." In addition, comments on Writing to Read may have been made because the interviewer was involved in the initial training effort, although this program was not mentioned explicitly.*

ATTACHMENT 3
EPSF STRUCTURED INTERVIEW RESPONSES
KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE TEACHERS

Teacher responses are provided below by question number. Both kindergarten and first grade teachers were asked most questions; exceptions are noted.

The tabulated responses are from the random sample of 12 kindergarten and 4 first grade teachers only. The open-ended comments are taken from the 24 teachers involved in the study. Tabulated responses are representative but do not include all comments made during interviews.

	Pilot	Random	Total
Teachers:			
Pre-School	1	0	1
Kindergarten	3	12	15
First Grade	4	4	8
Total	8	16	24

Question 1: **Do you think EPSF is an effective early childhood program?**

	Yes	No	Unsure
Kindergarten	50%*	8.3%	41.6%
First Grade	75%	25.0%	0.0%

*Just the screening (1)
*If integrated into the curriculum (1)

It's still new to us, so let's evaluate for a longer time before acting on its fate."
A kindergarten teacher

Question 2: **What are its strengths?**

	K	G1
Early identification of children with needs	66.7%	75%
Hard data helps in working with parents--has more credibility than just teacher opinion.	33.3%	0%
Helpful for home use	25.0%	25%
Helps magnet schools design better electives for children with considerable and moderate needs	16.0%	0%
Identifies specific instructional strategies	16.0%	0%
Organization and format	16.0%	0%
Accountability component	16.0%	0%
Excellent idea source for new teachers	8.3%	0%
Developmental philosophy	8.3%	0%
Makes teachers more aware of the individual child	8.3%	25%
Immediate identification of gifted children	0.0%	25%
EPSF is good for social developmental, but...	0.0%	25%

Question 3: **What are its weaknesses?**

	K	G1
Too demanding-too much time is required	58.3%	0%
Parents need more training	25.0%	0%
Parents think the home activities are too simple	16.7%	0%
Parents want a more academic program	16.7%	0%
Screening is done too early in the year	16.7%	0%
Validity of the screening and posttest data is questionable	16.7%	25%
"I already know the 'needs' children."	16.7%	0%

	K	G1
"Needs" group is often too large within a class	16.7%	0%
Not enough materials and supplies are provided	8.3%	25%
Children make slow progress with EPSF	8.3%	0%
Need more personnel for screening	8.3%	0%
Parents of "needs" children do not follow through	8.3%	0%
Materials are too expensive	8.3%	0%
"Needs" children are given a deprived feeling	8.3%	0%
PAC BOX is repetitious	8.3%	0%
PAC BOX activities are boring	8.3%	0%
EPSF is good for a very small group of the children	8.3%	0%
EPSF needs to give more academic information	0.0%	25%

(Questions 4-7 were asked of kindergarten teachers only)

Question 4: **Is EPSF worth the time required for training?**

Yes: 66.6%
No: 16.6%
Unsure: 16.6%

Question 5: **Is EPSF worth the time required for screening?**

Yes: 91.6%
No: 8.3%

Question 6: **Is EPSF worth the time spent for paperwork?**

Yes: 66.6%
No: 33.3%

Question 7: **Is EPSF worth the time required for instruction?**

Yes: 58.3%
No: 41.6%

16.5% answered "yes," but only the way that they had adapted the instruction.
16.5% answered "no," but would feel differently if instruction were integrated.

Question 8: **What outcomes have you seen from EPSF?**

None: Kindergarten 75% First Grade 100%
Other: 25%

From kindergarten teachers

It is hard to say what outcomes EPSF is responsible for	33.3%
Positive self-esteem	33.3%
Help is mostly in the form of teacher guidance	33.3%
Pulls things together early for the teacher	8.3%
Positive effect on parents	8.3%
More oral expression	8.3%
Not sure about the results	8.3%

Question 9: **Do the EPSF strategies support the early childhood program in your school?**

	Yes	No	Unsure	Comments
Kindergarten	91.7%	0%	8.3%	*"Yes, but I would have done them anyway, only more randomly."* *"Yes, but our program is better. We use units..."*
First Grade	75.0%	0%	25.0%	

Question 10: **Do you feel that most of the teachers in your school view EPSF as an effective program?**

	Yes	No	Unsure	Other	Comments
Kindergarten	33.3%	16.7%	33.3%	16.7%	*"Yes, but it would make little difference in our program if it were not here."*
First Grade	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	

Question 11: **Do you feel that most of the teachers in the district view EPSF as an effective program?**

	Yes	No	Unsure	Other	Comments
Kindergarten	25%	25%	33.3%	16.7%*	*"They feel as I do--one more segment of the day to plan."*
First Grade	25%	25%	50.0%	0.0%	*"It dies at the end of kindergarten."* *"Kindergarten, maybe. First grade teachers are book-bound."*
* Most teachers do not follow procedures. [screening only]					

Question 12: **How would you evaluate your EPSF training?**

	Good	Adequate	Less Than adequate	Had none	Comment
Kindergarten	50%	8.3%	33.3%	8.3%	*"Too much too quickly!"*
First Grade	0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	

Question 13: **How many sessions have you attended since your initial training?**

	0	1	2	3-4
Kindergarten	66.7%*	8.3%	8.3%	16.7%
First Grade	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%

* Some of these were general area meetings during which time EPSF was one of several discussions.

Question 14a: **What additional assistance have you received?** (Kindergarten Only)

None: 83.3%
Worked with other teachers: 16.7%

Question 14b: **Have you requested help?**

Yes: 8.3%*
No: 91.7%

* *"Yes, but I had an unpleasant experience by phone when I asked for help."*
Teacher Comment

Question 15a: **How do you schedule the EPSF modality strategies in your daily routine?**

(Kindergarten Only)

Incorporated into general curriculum and centers 75.0%
Modality groups meet during rest time 16.7%
Irregularly 16.7%
Peer tutoring 8.3%

Question 15b: **Do you regularly schedule the EPSF strategies in your instructional routine?**
(First Grade)

No 100% *"...not in my regular class, but more in the electives."*

Question 16: **Do you find it difficult to schedule the EPSF modality groups?**

	Yes	No	Not when integrated	Comments
Kindergarten	25.0%	8.3%	66.7%	*"Yes,...It slips and slides...center time, rest period..."*
First Grade	25.0%	75.0%	Integrated curriculum	

Question 17: **How do you measure student progress between the fall screening and the posttest?**
(Kindergarten Only)

Observation	100.0%
Interaction	58.3%
Informal screening and assessment	33.3%
Experience	25.0%

Question 18: **How do you record progress between fall screening and the posttest?**
(Kindergarten Only)

Teacher-made chart or system	83.3%
Report Card	8.3%
"It's difficult."	8.3%

Question 19: **Have you had adequate personnel to implement the EPSF program?**
(Kindergarten Only)

Yes: 33.3%
No: 66.7%

Question 20: **Have you had adequate materials to implement the EPSF program?**
(Kindergarten Only)

Yes: 91.7%
No: 8.3%

Question 21: **Have you had adequate supplies to implement the EPSF program?**
(Kindergarten Only)

(This question evoked very strong teacher response)

Yes: 8.3% *"But not as many as in years past."*
No: 91.7%

Some responses:

I spend about $30 each weekend on supplies for my class.

I have spent $900 this year for supplies, and I have kept the receipts.

I have a teacher friend who has spent $1500, but I just can't afford that.

I have spent $450 for pens, markers, soil, seeds, cups, tissues, etc. this year.

We beg! This is a real problem area. I have spent about $500 for supplies. Supply orders just don't come in as ordered from the warehouse.

It's easy to spend a lot of money for supplies.

...spent large amounts of money for my kindergarten supplies before, but this year...financial difficulty. I've asked parents to send in things, but my students have not had the experiences that my other classes have had. My assistant has bought a lot of the supplies. I've only spent $50 this year.

Items teachers bought:

Cooking supplies	Ping-pong balls
Newsprint	Dishpans
Crayons	General art supplies
Glue	Snacks for children who cannot bring them
Recommended games	Science supplies

Question 22: **How have you used the EPSF posttest results from kindergarten?**
(First Grade)

Grouping and seating	50%
Awareness of students with special needs	50%
Assistant uses the posttest information	25%

Question 23: **Are the "needs" students from kindergarten flagged in their permanent folder or in another way for easy identification?** (First Grade)

Yes: 50%
No: 50%

Question 24: **How do you coordinate your efforts with the kindergarten teachers?**
(First Grade)

Do not:	75%
Elective Planning:	25%

Question 25: **How do you follow up in first grade with students who have considerable needs?**
(First Grade)

Assistant uses the PAC BOX activities during center time	50%
Parent volunteers	25%
Choosing electives	25%
More peer tutoring	25%
Use it at the first of the year	25%

Question 26: **Do you have concerns regarding the early childhood program in your school? If so, what are they?**

	Yes	No
Kindergarten	75%	25%
First Grade	75%	25%

School concerns: Kindergarten

More manipulatives in the first grade and less pencil and paper	41.7%
Smoother transition between kindergarten and first grade	33.3%
"We don't meet the needs of our K-2 children"	16.7%
Curriculum in K-2 is rigid	16.7%
First grade teachers are compelled to teach skills in order to get ready for ESAR and ESAM whether the children..are ready or not	16.7%
EPSF screening environment	8.3%
Children become angry at the curriculum in first grade	8.3%
Too much pressure on kindergarten teachers to get children "ready"	8.3%
K-2 teachers need to meet and plan together.	8.3%
Lack of personal warmth beyond kindergarten	8.3%

School Concerns: First Grade

Kindergarten students often do well, but first grade is academic, so students find it to be a difficult setting. Parents have a hard time accepting that.	50%
Need a pre-school program here	25%
Need more time for basic instruction	25%

Question 27: **Do you have concerns regarding the early childhood program in the district? If so, what are they?**

	Yes	No	Unsure
Kindergarten	83.3%	8.3%	8.3%
First Grade	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%

District Concerns: Kindergarten

District keeps adding to the curriculum without taking anything out	25.0%
More accommodation of developmental needs	25.0%
No state philosophy. The philosophy of early childhood education varies from teacher to teacher	16.7%
Lack of continuity among schools	8.3%
Retention in kindergarten	8.3%
More preschool programs for deprived children	8.3%
Too much emphasis on testing	8.3%

District Concerns: First Grade

First grade curriculum needs to be reexamined/revised	50%
More preschool opportunities	25%
Formal reading skills come too early.	25%

Question 28: **Do you have additional comments that you would like to make as a part of this interview?**

(These comments were taken from all the teachers in the study.)

I use little of EPSF per se. Our program is much better. *K*

...were told the EPSF program required about 20 minutes per day. Actually it took 30 minutes from beginning to end. I could not get everything in. Now that integration of EPSF strategies has been approved, it's better. *K*

ESAR and ESAM have skills for which teachers are accountable. EPSF does not always fit. *G1*

I moved to this district several years ago. There was Writing to Read with no real training, but we had to have it. I finally got into the swing of it, liked it, and then it was watered down. Then they took our computers and left old ones that constantly needed repair. Now, we have a choice. Some teachers want it, some don't. Then came EPSF. It was mandated even though the training was less than adequate. Then it was watered down. This is really hard. There is no real commitment that teachers can buy into. *K*

Too many programs have been added with no dismissal of other programs. Consequently, we have a fragmented early childhood program, and we're all frustrated. I really want to do my work well. *K*

Do you realize how many programs have been implemented and pushed aside or neglected? The staff development has been overwhelming, yet there's not enough money for the children.

Wake County is like a big clumsy elephant...Each school is doing something different...trying something new. *K*

We need time to refine the good programs we have, and they need to stop handing out new ones. *K*

...too many fragmented programs and a lack of continuity among the schools. *K*

With Writing to Read" there is an overlap of prescribed activities. I find that the EPSF strategies are very appropriate in the lab. K

We have Writing to Read, and the other teachers really like it, but I have had no formal training for it. Could new teachers be assured of training for programs that Wake County endorses? K

Writing to Read was good, and it was developmental in my last school, but is frowned upon here. Writing to Read is good for children. There is a lack of creative thinking and writing in our kindergartens, I feel. K

Since I have been in Wake County, our kindergartens have always been strong. Writing to Read gives every child the greatest opportunity for growth. G1

There is a continuing basic struggle between a developmental and an academic philosophy for kindergarten. Wake County needs a stated early childhood philosophy...would rather have a stated philosophy that I didn't totally agree with than have none at all. G1

Wake County needs curriculum revision in kindergarten through grade two. Children need more one-to-one experiences. The current curriculum leaves little time for the child to reflect, think, and maybe write. The nurturing of relationships is very important, and there is too little time. The current curriculum, except for language arts, is just too sophisticated. K

Upper grade teachers (1-5) do not understand that what is done in kindergarten has relevance to what they do. K

Our children view first grade as difficult. They come back and peek in the door or drop in after school. Children do not have enough time to play and develop and learn to think before they're given dull drills with paper and pencil. The first grade teachers are not at fault, however. They're doing what they have been told to do. K

First grade teachers need training in the developmental stages of learning. K

" *Several teachers and principals commented favorable on the Writing to Read program. An increasing body of research indicates that the program is not as effective as it was once touted to be. Their comments are included here as an indicator of their concerns and, in some cases, misconceptions about the district's "endorsement." In addition, comments on Writing to Read may have been made because the interviewer was involved in the initial training effort, although this program was not mentioned.*

We feel tremendous pressure from parents, administration (downtown), testing and the media. K

Teachers need a pat on the back, to feel that others realize that teachers are doing things rather well. K

Do you know that I do not hear singing in the first grade? They are busy teaching skills. K

Five year olds should be tested before day one, and we could screen out children who don't need to be here even before they are enrolled. K

We should screen kindergartners before school, and put the considerable needs children together in one classroom to narrow the range. The teacher would have more time to individualize instruction and meet their needs. Then we could have some transition kindergartens like they have in some other school systems... K

Could a task force look into the Circle Childhood Program to determine its appropriateness for Wake County? K

It is pathetic what they expect us to do with so little. K

My greatest concern for Wake County children is for those at home with an economically deprived mother who is not helping her children grow. G1

The NC State Assessment for Reading and Math could take the place of ESAR and ESAM. It gives a quality picture of the child. Those of us in the district who have been trained have not been invited to share this tool with others. G1

Senate Bill II has been wonderful! I didn't always like the meetings, but the results have been positive for the children. We're giving these children more than ever because of Senate Bill II. G1